

GRANITE HILL PLANTATION, Quarry No. 1
South side of State Route 16, 1.3 miles northeast of Sparta
Sparta Vicinity
Hancock County
Georgia

HAER No. GA-156-A

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD
SOUTHEAST REGIONAL OFFICE
National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior
100 Alabama Street SW
Atlanta, GA 30303

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Location: South side of State Route 16, 1.3 miles northeast of Sparta, Hancock County, Georgia

U.S.G.S. 7.5 minute Sparta, Georgia quadrangle
Universal Transverse Mercator coordinates: 17.319240.3684510

Significance: Granite Hill Plantation historically consisted of 1,547 acres amassed by Andrew Jackson Lane, a wealthy Hancock County planter. The plantation was one of the largest in the county, and is associated with both the antebellum agricultural reform movement and early granite quarrying. This quarry is one of four on the former Granite Hill Plantation site that were put into use as early as 1850 to provide building materials throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and these early quarrying techniques are evident at the site.

Description: Quarry No. 1 is located at the base of a ridge slope near Two Mile Creek. Irregularly shaped, the quarry measures approximately 120' north to south and 90' east to west. The quarry pit, with a depth of at least 25', is the deepest at Granite Hill. Evidence of mounting bolts for a derrick or gantry are present on top of the western quarry wall. Numerous 2" diameter holes exist on the southern quarry wall, approximately 2' from the face of the quarry. Thick vegetation has encroached on the quarry site to within a couple of yards of the quarry face, leaving only a large pond as the primary evidence of quarrying activity at the site.

History: As evidenced by Granite Hill and numerous other residences in the vicinity, Sparta granite deposits were used locally to construct foundations and chimneys throughout the nineteenth century. After the Civil War, small local quarries were established to provide crushed gravel for construction of the rail bed for the Macon and Augusta Railroad. When the Macon and Augusta was completed in 1868, the railroad, in turn, allowed quarried granite to be more readily and economically transported to other markets.

In 1888, W. B. Lee assumed management of one of the local Sparta quarries; he later supervised construction of a granite cotton gin near the Granite Hill railroad station. In 1898, Lee purchased 1500 acres of the old Granite Hill plantation from the Middle Georgia Land and Immigration Company to establish a commercial quarry. Lee subsequently leased the property to the Georgia Quincy Granite Company in 1902. On a visit that same year to the Granite Hill quarry, the State geologists from the Geological Survey of Georgia noted that the property had eight acres of granite outcrops. They further noted that the quarry extended over about three acres and that the "first raise" was being undertaken during the writer's visit. A large working force was observed, with most of the stone being worked into Belgian blocks and curbing for street use. A half mile railroad spur, or "side-track" was built from the quarry to the Macon and Augusta line. The granite curbing and paving stone was principally shipped to both Macon, Georgia and Tampa, Florida.

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Sources: For additional written historical and descriptive information, please see the main entry for Granite Hill Plantation, HABS No. GA-2396. Granite Hill Quarry No. 1 was also recorded as Georgia Archaeological Site No. 9HK241.

Historian: William M. Brockenbrough, Brockington and Associates, Inc., 2008.

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Sketch Site Map of Granite Hill Plantation Quarry No. 1

